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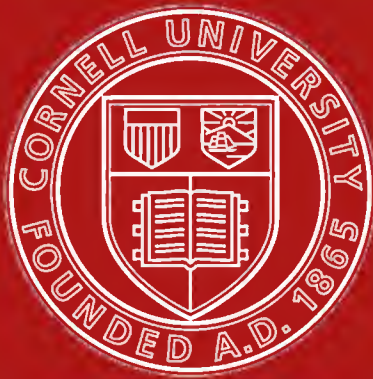
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LESSONS IN MASSACRE;

OR,

THE CONDUCT OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT IN AND ABOUT BULGARIA

SINCE MAY, 1876.

CHIEFLY FROM THE PAPERS PRESENTED BY COMMAND.

BY THE

RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.

“Away, with me, all you whose souls abhor
The uncleanly savours of a slaughterhouse;
For I am stifled with this smell of sin.”
KING JOHN, iv. 3.

L O N D O N :

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LESSONS IN MASSACRE.

I.

THE INTRODUCTION.

THE lesson, which the Turkish Government has conveyed to its Mahometan subjects by its conduct since last May in the matter of the Bulgarian rising, cannot be more pithily or more accurately expressed than in the three short English words, "Do it again." My charge is, that this lesson was conveyed; and not only conveyed, but intended to be conveyed; that it is as plain, as if it had been set forth expressly in a Firman of the Sultan, or a Fetwa of the Sheik ool Islam. To comprehend aright this great lesson in Massacre, we must look at the facts as a whole, and must carefully scrutinise the details in themselves, as well as in their bearing one upon another. It may seem that one, who is no more than a private individual, is guilty of presumption in dealing with so great and perilous a question. But I have a great faith in the power of opinion, of the opinion of civilised and Christian Europe. It

can remove mountains. I have seen this in the recent past; and I seem to see it in no distant future.

Six months ago, England and Europe had just learned, upon official authority, the reality and extent of the Massacres, and of the outrages far worse than Massacre, in Bulgaria. Over and above the horrors of the perpetration, there was ground for the darkest surmises as to the seat of the ultimate responsibility for those fiendish crimes. Miscreants, fatally prominent in the proceedings, had been decorated and rewarded; and the solemn business of retributive inquiry had been visibly tampered with by the Turkish Government, to which we had been lending, through a blood-stained period, our moral and our material support. But the revelation of the facts was still new; and there had not been time sufficient for clearly carrying home the guilt beyond the wretched men, who performed the deeds of blood and shame. The belief that a Government in alliance with Her Majesty could stand in close complicity with crimes, so foul that the very possibility of them seems to lower the level of our nature, was a belief so startling, nay, so horrible, that it was not fit to be entertained, unless upon the clearest and fullest evidence. And all this time we were unblushingly assured, by one if not more of the organs of the Turkish cause in the London Press, that order, momentarily disturbed in Bulgaria by agents from

abroad, had been restored, and that life, honour, and property were secure under a calumniated but really paternal Government.

As time has gone on, and facts have gradually emerged, those surmises, which at first floated as thin vapours in the air, have acquired more and more of substance and consistency : and at length the copious, but not too copious, Papers supplied to Parliament have so accumulated the evidence, as to leave no longer any room for reasonable doubt. We have now to confront a fact, more revolting than the fact of the Massacres themselves. The supposition, which I have described as too shocking to be entertained in our state of imperfect knowledge, now stands forth as clear as the lurid light of a furnace against the blackness of a nocturnal sky. Let me try to make entirely plain the issue, which in these pages I desire to raise.

There were separate acts which, in September, it was perhaps possible to construe, by a large indulgence, as referable to weakness, to accident, or to the bewilderment and confusion attendant upon war, in a country which never had any but a military organisation, and which has now lost in the main even that solitary ornament. Such a construction would now be irrational. All the acts, and all the non-acts, of the Turkish Government, before the rising when we knew them scantily, during and since the lamentable scenes, when we know them but too fully, stand forth

to view in a dark and fatal consistency. It matters not who was Sultan or who was Vizir. Rushdi was as Mahmoud, and Midhat was as Rushdi, and Edhem thus far is as Midhat. There is a point of development and ripeness in a series of acts, at which tendency becomes proof of purpose; as there is also a point in the accumulation of evidence, at which not to see guilt is in some measure to share it. When deeds admit of no interpretation but one, that one can no longer be honourably avoided. The acts of the Porte, through nine long months, demonstrate a deliberate intention, and a coherent plan. That purpose has been to cover up iniquity; to baffle inquiry; to reward prominence in crime; to punish or discourage humanity among its own agents; to prolong the reign of terror; to impress with a steady coherency upon the minds of its Mahometan subjects this but too intelligible lesson for the next similar occasion, *do it again*.

I hope that my charge against the Porte is now intelligible and clear. My first duty was to make it so. My second is, to allow that no one should accept it from me as proved, but to ask every one to examine and pronounce upon the proof; which will be drawn principally, indeed almost exclusively, from the official information supplied by British Agents. If I take it as my third duty to look around for some palliation of what appears so monstrous a wickedness, I can only find it in this. In what we deem

atrocities, the Porte sees only energy. What we think crimes, the Porte holds to be services. To uphold the existing relation of domination on one side, and servitude on the other, by that FORCE, in which all along the Osmanli have lived and moved and had their being, is for the Turk the one great commandment "on which hang all the law and the prophets." Violence and fury, fraud and falsehood, are sanctified when, in circumstances of adequate magnitude, they are addressed to such an end. The utmost refinements of cruelty, the most bestial devices of lust, become either meritorious or venial, when they are the incidental accompaniments of the good and holy work. All these things, which are terrible to say, are, if true, yet more terrible to leave unsaid. I will therefore set about the proof; and, to give at once a true view of the scope of the undertaking, I will specify its heads.

I. When it had become plain, long after the fact, that the Massacres could not be hushed up, in the manner of an everyday occurrence, the Porte attempted to veil them by ordering inquiries not judicial, but simply illusory, in the hands of men altogether unfit.

II. This expedient having failed, the next was to appoint another inquiry under judicial forms, but with ample security, whether in the characters of the men, the forms of proceeding, or the instructions given, or

possibly from all, against its attaining the ends of justice. Even this inquiry was not extended, for many months, to the North of the Balkan.

III. The conduct of the insurgents in the rebellion afforded no warrant whatever for the conduct of the Turks in the suppression.

IV. After that suppression, after all the streams of blood that had been shed, Bulgarians were imprisoned by thousands, and detained in foul dens under the name of prisons, on the vaguest charges of complicity in the insurrection. Detained (mostly) for long terms, often, when no charge could be formulated against them, they were left to perish in their gaols. Large numbers were condemned and hung : while those who were liberated, or were sent in transit from prison to prison, were subjected to shameful, and in some cases murderous ill-treatment.

V. While all this was going on, honours and rewards were copiously showered upon the miscreants, who had distinguished themselves by superior atrocity.

VI. And, as a just counterpart to the last named proceeding, those Mahometans, who had nobly hindered or slackened the work of blood, sometimes at great risk to themselves, were in every instance either passed over or dismissed.

VII. We have distinct cases, in which Mahometan Commissioners on the bench shamefully interrupted the proceedings to hinder the course of justice ; and

the declaration of the Consul of the United States that Selim Effendi tortured prisoners in gaol to compel them to give the evidence he desired, which was made in September last, has not yet been met.

VIII. No attempt was made to restore in any sense the dwellings of the people, which had been destroyed wholesale, until there had come a peremptory diplomatic demand from England, scarcely less than an order.

IX. When these so-called restorations began, they appear to have been made by the forced labour of the people, principally of Christians already plundered and destitute; with a contribution from the Porte, apparently less than one-tenth of what English alms alone, to say nothing of Russian gifts, have supplied for the destitute, and less than one-hundredth of the ruin which, by its agents, it had wrought.

X. The extortions of the Government under the name of taxes were still continued in districts, and upon persons, whom their servants had reduced to misery.

XI. All this time the outrages were also continued; the same in kind, though on a scale less magnificent and imperial than in the month of May; and it is a moral certainty, that they continue still.

XII. Though it was only by a supply of regular forces, under proper command, that security could be re-established, these troops were advisedly kept

back ; and, when the diplomatic pressure for them was found too strong for direct refusal, a promise to supply them was made and broken.

XIII. Among all the descriptions, or references, by the Porte, touching these horrible and shameful excesses, there is not found one single word of condemnation or regret.

XIV. On the contrary, it is officially denied that any excesses at all occurred on the part of the Mahometans. The Commission down to the date of Oct. 30 had not been able so much as to determine that the great massacre of Batak was a criminal transaction.

XV. When the accused Bulgarians have been hung, and the prisons at length nearly emptied, but proceedings against Turkish criminals hardly begun, and when an Amnesty is demanded for the Christians, the Porte, by a counter-proposal of a general amnesty, seeks to cover its own still unpunished agents.

XVI. After all the acts of falsehood, concealment, obstruction, and delay have been exhausted, with reward or impunity for the bad, discouragement or dismissal for the good, and the careful maintenance of the reign of terror in the desolated region, it is officially declared by the highest authority, that the proceedings in the suppression of the Bulgarian rising were not worthy of condemnation but of praise.

XVII. And it may now be stated as a matter beyond doubt, that the inquiry into the excesses, the granting of which was a concession to pressure, has proved to be a fictitious and pretended inquiry, beginning in obstruction, and ending in mockery.

The English Government, which on the 21st of September demanded reparation, security, and signal punishment of principal offenders, is disparaged and insulted by the substantial refusal of its demands.

And I may now again sum up these accusations by saying that, if proved, they show that the Turkish Government has since the Massacres, by word and act, been steadily inculcating this one lesson—*do it again*.

Before dealing with the charges specifically, I must premise two or three observations.

First, the facts are incomplete; that is to say, they are not the whole facts. It is possible that there may be circumstances, unknown to us, which might in some points diminish the force of some among those known. But, in the first place, the known facts (and I have omitted very many) are such that, over and above what is needed for proof, they leave a large surplusage of force. Secondly, they have been collected by men impartial and, in almost every case, officially responsible. Thirdly, it is plain that the great hindrance to a yet fuller development of the case has not been the manufacture of false complaints by the Bulgarians, but

the terror of recollection, and the terror of anticipation, which has made it extremely difficult in many instances to obtain from them any full statements in accusation of their masters.* Fourthly, there is no portion of the evidence which leads to darker inferences, than that which is supplied by the language of the Porte and of its agents. Again, viewing the marked general character of the facts, the only reasonable supposition is that their further multiplication would only have worsened the case in its quantity ; as to quality, nothing could worsen it. Lastly, I have laboured hard to make myself master of these Papers ; but, from their great and miscellaneous mass, and the difficulty of tracing their order, I may in this or that instance have failed, not wilfully, to state the case with adequate fulness and exactitude.

Secondly. I hold it to be a reasonable inference from the whole circumstances, and in particular from the conduct of the Porte as an accessory after the fact, that the Bashi Bazouks were originally chosen as the main instruments of repression, together with the Mussulman population, in order that it might be the more effective, that is to say, the more terrible, the more bloody, and the more brutal. For we find that this was the surmise of those best qualified to judge (*e.g.* Papers I. 432). And again,

See *e.g.* Papers I. 524.

there is no other reason to be assigned for the employment of the irregulars, and for letting loose the population. There was ample time to supply troops between the first of May, when the first serious events occurred (Papers I. 144-6, and Schuyler,* Section on the Insurrection of May, 1876), and the tragedy of Batak, which occurred on the 9th of May.

To say they were wanted elsewhere, would be ridiculous. Only an insignificant fraction of the army was employed in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the empire generally was tranquil; and the war with Serbia did not break out until two months after the beginning of the brief revolt.

At the same time, we have not here the cumulative proof from acts anterior to the crisis, which establishes the subsequent sanction and adoption of the Massacres. The light, thrown by that after-conduct upon the prior measures, leaves little room for doubt, that a repression of such a character, as that which actually happened, was within the original intentions of the Porte. I state this, however, not as demonstration, but as reasonable inference.

* It may be well to mention that the Report of Mr. Schuyler, to which my references are made, is an enlarged and digested form of the document which appears in Papers I. 167. I translate from the French version, kindly sent me by the author. It is dated Nov. 20, 1876.

II.

THE PROOF.

I. It would appear that at the outset the Porte was thoroughly satisfied with the Repression, and had nothing to do but to imprison, try, and hang Bulgarians, and to distribute rewards like our War Office and Admiralty after some gallant service. It was very gradually made to understand that there was other work, not indeed to do, but to pretend to do. The first proceeding taken by the Porte in the vindication of justice was the appointment of a Commissioner, as late as July 17, to examine, as was pretended, into crimes committed in May. We read in the Papers of 1876, under that date (III. 376): "A Turkish functionary of high position has been sent as Extraordinary Commissioner to suppress the excesses being committed in Bulgaria. He will be furnished with full powers to inflict summary punishment."

It is necessary here to consider whether this Government, with its defective organisation, was in real, or only in official, ignorance of the gravity of the case?

We now know the proper answer, in connection with a most singular occurrence, which Sir Henry Elliot has mentioned, but not explained.

It was on the 26th of last June, that the first questions were put in the two Houses of Parliament to the Government of this country respecting the Bulgarian Atrocities. The answer, certainly given with perfect truth, was to the effect that there was no official information to justify the statements in circulation. But in February, 1877, we became for the first time aware that, twelve days before that date, Vice-Consul Brophy had sent from Bourgas a report, correcting or reversing a former report of June 4, and setting forth fully the horrible massacre of unresisting Bulgarians at Boyadjik by Shefket Pacha. "Of some 2000 men, women, and children, only about 50 escaped." There were the usual accompaniments of plunder and kidnapping. In the Caza of Bourgas "brigandage and robbery are, as usual, the order of the day." A man of ninety had been carried to the mountains, another man, who is named, had been burned with hot irons upon the breast, for purposes of extortion. A Commissioner had been sent; but "the local authorities had already concerted steps to prevent his arriving at the knowledge of the truth." Such are some of the contents of the despatch which, while England was still in the dark on this vital matter, was calmly slumbering in the pigeon-holes of the Embassy at Constantinople. But on the 8th of September, when the Indignation was already at its height, there arrived at the Foreign Office a despatch from Sir H. Elliot,

which commenced with the following unimpassioned remark. "The inclosed despatch from the Vice-Consul Brophy appears not to have been forwarded, as it ought to have been, when it was received" (Papers I. 116, 117).

It had been, however, immediately communicated to Safvet Pacha ; and the business of ineffectual protest was, for the thousandth time, duly recommenced. Of the miscreant Shefket Pacha I treat elsewhere. What I now wish to bring home is this : that within a few days (as it must have been) after the 14th of June the Porte was made aware, on British and official authority, of one of the worst of the Bulgarian Massacres. It had appointed a Commissioner to inquire ; and measures to make the local inquiry useless had already been taken by its own local authorities. It was with this knowledge of the scale of the horrors which had been perpetrated, that the Porte appointed Kiani Pacha to make his general inquiry.

Of the "full powers" to "suppress excesses," and "inflict summary punishment," with which the Parliamentary Papers of 1876 conveniently closed, and on which for a time we fed in delusive hope, we hear no more. But we find Kiani Pacha acquainting Mr. Schuyler (see his last Section) that the insurgents had slain a Mudir's wife and daughter ; whereas he had no daughter, and his wife was alive and absent.

The Porte likewise sent other chosen Agents to

report upon the condition of Bulgaria. The most important inquiry, which embraced the Southern Vilayet, was intrusted to Edib Effendi.

Musurus Pacha, without doubt acting simply as the mouthpiece of his Government, on the 4th of August sends this Report of Edib Effendi, for the Vilayet of Adrianople, to Lord Derby, with the assurance that

“This conscientious Report exposes in the most impartial manner the latest events of which Bulgaria has been the scene ; it makes the facts appear in their true light, and shows in the most indisputable manner which side committed those atrocities that have so deeply moved the Sublime Porte and all Europe.” (Papers of 1876, No. V. p. 27.)

And so forth.

In this paper we hear much of the outrages committed by Bulgarians ; and the Commissioner, in winding up his preposterous account of what happened at Batak, bursts into a noble indignation, and even curses (‘Rapport,’ p. 11) those who had induced the Bulgarians to rebel. According to him, there was a sanguinary battle, with heavy losses on both sides ! According to Baring (I. 154), there was “hardly any loss inflicted on either side in action.” Of the massacre, the burning, the heaps of unburied corpses of women and children, there is not a trace in the “conscientious Report” of Edib Effendi.

Nor is there, according to this worthy, a trace of

any one cruel, disgraceful, or even precipitate act by a Mussulman ; though he tells us of their extraordinary care in sparing women and children (p. 8). But as I am accusing the Turkish Government of deliberate and wholesale falsehood, used to conceal its other and still greater crimes, I will refer more explicitly to his account of the proceedings at Boyadjikevi, in contrast with that of Mr. Baring.

He says that, in a severe action, most of the houses took fire, and all the cattle attached to them there-upon took refuge with the Turkish soldiery. The losses of the Bulgarians were between 70 and 80 ; no women or children, except one single woman hit by a ball (' Rapport,' p. 13). The number was swelled, by the exaggeration of the villagers, to 100 or 110.

We turn to Mr. Baring (I. 158), and we find that, out of 139 houses, all were burned but 20 ; 143 men and 6 women were massacred ; 13,000 animals were carried off. Mr. Schuyler, at a much later date, gives the official number of the slain (Section on Sliven) at 170, including 2 priests, 8 women, and 8 children. The Kaimakam of Yamboli took 120 cows for his own share. It is not pretended that at this village any Mussulman had been slain. The cause, which led the villagers to meet together and consider their state, was that some Turks came to extort money on the 24th and 25th of May, and "ravished one man's wife and daughter" (I. 158).

We cannot therefore be surprised, if the Report

of Edib Effendi exhausted the long-suffering even of Sir Henry Elliot, and was described by him as “entirely untrustworthy;” if Mr. Baring treats it as “pretty correct” in the part which does *not* relate to the Massacres, and as false or worthless in what does (I. 155, 166); and if Consul Schuyler (*sub fin.*) bluntly characterises it as “a string of falsehoods.”

Such was the official mendacity, by which the Porte, three months after the Massacres, strove to delude Europe and to conceal its crimes.

II. But the air was stirred disagreeably by strong vibrations from the English Parliament and Press, which partially forestalled the noble movement of the people; and the matter could not rest here; for, if opinion were too impudently braved, what would become of the moral support that had been officially promised, and the material support that had been actually given, and not withdrawn, by the ancient ally on whom Turkey could always depend? On the 29th of August, Earl Derby thought it necessary to warn the Government at Constantinople of the rising indignation and disgust of the nation: and about September 12 or 13 they must have been put in possession by the post of his despatch of September 5. At length, under the compulsion of the tempest from the West, so late as the 17th September, four months after the Massacres, a new Commission was appointed to do what we were told had been done in July; to inquire, and punish the guilty.

It would be instructive to see the terms of this appointment; but they have not been supplied (I. 371).

It was composed of four Mussulmans and four Christians. Among each moiety, says Sir H. Elliot, "were true and resolute men; but there are others in whom equal confidence cannot be felt." Unfortunately, he does not tell us which were which. In my eyes, the appointment of Christians as such is a matter of small moment. What we want is the virtue and courage of the man, not his religious profession. Of the Christian servants of the Porte, some are venal, some are servile. I rather think Blacque Bey is a Christian; but the name of a Blacque is attached to the shameful document which suppresses the 'Courier d'Orient,' and (August 3) speaks of the "pretended excesses" in Bulgaria.*

What I submit is this; that Turkey offered a fresh insult to us, and to the whole civilised world, in daring to appoint on this Commission, *quæ sera tamen respexit inertem*, any members, of whom Sir Henry Elliot has to record that confidence could not be reposed in their character and courage (I. 371): and of whom he does not even say, that they formed a minority in the Commission.

It was in part to encourage the better-minded

* *Prétendus*. 'The Bulgarian Horrors,' p. 29. The subsequent language leaves little room for doubt that *pretended*, and not *alleged*, is the true sense of the word.

Commissioners against their colleagues, that Mr. Baring was sent to attend the proceedings. Sir H. Elliot also thought it would encourage witnesses to speak, who might otherwise avoid the risk.

It was only at a later date that the Commission was empowered to include within its scope the Vilayet of the Danube. But it never went there at all.

We shall see farther on what was the conduct of the Commission.

III. It may be thought that a defence for the Turks is to be found in the allegations of cruel acts done by the revolted Bulgarians. On this plea, I take leave to assert that there is no such defence; nor the shadow of it.

1. Outrages by oppressed inferiors do not excuse like outrages by the race which has held them down, and ground them into debasement, by superior force: much less do they excuse outrages at least a hundredfold in amount, and immeasurably different in their savage and filthy brutality.

2. Assertions from Turkish agents of outrages by Bulgarians are of no more weight, than their denials of outrages by Turks, which are shown by impartial reports to be valueless. It is remarkable, however, that the Turks themselves deal mainly in generalities on the subject, and allege (Schuyler, *sub fin.*) not more than twelve deaths of Mahometan women and children.

3. The assertions by Christian Commissioners of

the Porte (I. 198), that the insurgents committed deeds of atrocity, are of no higher value, until we know that they were men of integrity and of courage, who would both wish and dare to speak the truth. They are also almost uniformly vague and without particulars.

4. Vice-Consul Dupuis has indeed reported (August 7, I. p. 51), that at Otlou-kevi the Bulgarians massacred eighty Mussulmans. But this appears only to prove his own credulity. Mr. Baring, in a document (I. 150) which "he thinks may be relied on," gives the number slain at Otlou-kevi by the insurgents at 14. The Christians killed at the same place, according to a detailed list, were 763 : viz.—

Men	...	...	...	...	262
Women	...	...	...	...	284
Children	...	...	...	...	217

Mr. Dupuis also reports two cases which, if they happened, were truly atrocious: that a boy had his fore-arms flayed; that a child was cut to pieces (and his flesh offered for sale—to whom?) Also that there were "unspeakable atrocities" on females. Mr. Baring, in a much fuller and more careful statement (I. 156), reports not one of these things; but says, two women were killed, one of them fighting. Mr. Schuyler, in summing up, mentions the same number, informs us that both were killed in a

skirmish, and adds the remarkable words, as applicable to the entire insurrection :

“ No woman, no child among the Turks was killed in cold blood. No woman was violated ; no Turk tortured.”

Mr. Dupuis ought, it would appear, either to support his statement, or to withdraw it. I see no cause, however, for ascribing it to intentional partiality.

5. Finally, we have learned from Mr. Baring, that the document called ‘ Catechism ’ or ‘ Instructions ’ of the Bulgarian leaders is authentic. In that document the orders are express (I. 194) ; “ no violence, no plunder, for men who submit ; the aged, the women, and the children, are to be watched over, as much as the honour and life of our own people.” (Nos. 12, 13.)

Mr. Baring sums up by saying on this part of the case : “ A small minority of the population committed reprehensible acts, which merited punishment ” (I. 166).

IV. The proceedings of the Porte against the perpetrators of massacre were slow, late, and reluctant ; those against the Bulgarians were brisk, lively, and spontaneous. On July 20 (I. 12) many Bulgarians had already been hanged for defending their houses and families against the Bashi Bazouks. Though it is impossible to obtain any full view of them from the Papers, it is also clear that the proceedings were wholesale.

Feeling the real importance of this count in the indictment, and of the contrasted proceedings against those who executed the Vengeance, I requested in the House of Commons on the 12th of February that the Government would endeavour, for greater accuracy, to put together succinctly the figures, so far as they might be at their command. With great courtesy, they sent immediately a telegram to Constantinople for the purpose; but as yet (March 10) without result.

Mr. Baring has given us certain figures for the districts of Philippopolis and Adrianople; at the first 1956 were imprisoned, and at the second he believes about 1200 (I. 159). To the northward, at Tirnovo, 430 were imprisoned (I. 162). At Philippopolis, 900 were still in prison when Mr. Baring came; on the 6th of September there were still 104 (I. 254). The total number of arrests, following upon the massacre of 15,000, may have been from four to five thousand.

As regards treatment in prison, Mr. Dupuis gives us the narrative of the priest, Peter Patcharutoff (I. 75). Charged as a rebel, he denied it. No evidence was produced. He was beaten, threatened with knives and with death by his "escort" of zaptiehs and Bashi Bazouks; compelled to save his life to sign a confession; and, on retracting it, he was first chained to the prison window, then shut up for five days in a sort of cupboard, where it was impossible to stretch his limbs or to sleep.

The Bulgarians of Philippopolis asserted (I. 147), that the greater part of the evidence was obtained by torture, while the Turks denied it. Three men told their own experience to Mr. Baring.

One was kept seventy-eight days in prison, nineteen of them in a cell with but just room to lie down. Declaring he had no evidence to give, he was partially hung, his toes just touching the ground, and kept so till he fainted. He was never examined; and at length was released (I. 147).

Another priest stated that he was confined for twenty-eight days, seven of them in a privy, and for three of them without either food or water.

A Greek physician who visited the prisons, thinks that, if there had been torture of these kinds, complaint would have been made to him. I am concerned to say that in my opinion a Greek, in Turkish employment at Philippopolis, was about the last man to whom a Bulgarian would be likely to complain.

Mr. Calvert some time later (September 6, I. 254), appears to have cleared up this subject: for he says that "the testimony of numerous eye-witnesses," as well as of sufferers, established "that violent means were used to extort the required confessions." In the case of three men from Tchirpan, a Turk confirmed the testimony (*ibid.*).

We now come to the savage vengeance of the Porte through its tribunals; not tribunals appointed to try the authors of the Massacre, but those which

dealt with charges of complicity in the poor and feeble rising.

In the Vilayet of the Danube, the movement had been very slight. Chakir Bey, in his Report dated July 2 (p. 7), says the losses of the Mussulmans consisted in some children and some shepherds killed near Yeni Kevy, with some wounded in actual conflict. The Prosecutor for the Government in the proceedings reported by Consul Reade on Aug. 21 (I. 53) charged two men capitally. But the Court condemned three; and they were executed at the end of the same sitting. In one case the cord broke three times; and the fourth time the man was partially held up by the soldiers, that it might not break again. This is not lawful execution, but death by torture. The other two were "most inhumanly treated" on their way to execution. Other severe sentences were pronounced; and "a few were acquitted."

The special tribunal of Philippopolis had so soon as Aug. 5 condemned to hard labour 65 Bulgarians and to death 27, of whom 25 had been executed. At Adrianople 18 were hung (I. 159). Two men, wholly unconnected with the revolt, were seized by Fazli Pacha, who got drunk, and ordered them to be hung immediately (I. 161). One officer refused obedience; another more docile was readily found, and the act was promptly performed. Twenty-two were hung at Tirnovo (I. 162). Twenty-five died in

prison at Philippopolis. It is plain that we are to count in hundreds the lives destroyed by sentence or by ill-usage. Mr. Baring stated the hangings (Oct. 30, p. 668) at about a hundred. These trials were but an afterpiece to the Vengeance, and an afterpiece in perfect keeping with the principal performance.

Hanging, on a smaller scale, was still proceeding in November (I. 752).

Mr. Baring says that whether the prisoners were tortured or not, there is no doubt that they were, while being conveyed to Philippopolis, most brutally ill-treated. Four hundred men, heavily chained, were "mercilessly beaten by their escort, and pelted and insulted by the Mussulman mob." Prisoners were beaten by zaptiehs, even on the way from the prison to the court. Of eighty sent from Philippopolis to Sofia, five died on the road (I. 147). Within the prison, 265 men were confined for four days in a bath, without the slightest attempt at drainage, and with such a stench, that the guards could not sit even in the ante-room, but remained in the street. Nami Effendi, First-Secretary to the Government, found the room-doors within the khans open on account of the heat: he ordered them to be shut. The state of things had been mitigated by July 21st (I. 148).

On August 11 (I. 61) it was promised by the Porte that all the prisoners not actually under trial,

except ringleaders, should be set at liberty without delay. But it was on November 1 that we find the trials of the remaining Bulgarian prisoners, who had been in prison since May, were only about to begin (I. 670). Finally (II. 60), on December 4, Mr. Baring *hopes* that in a short time all the prisoners will be set free.

V. I come to the important subject of the liberal rewards bestowed by the Turkish Government upon its most distinguished miscreants, to encourage them in their profession.

And as it is desirable, without neglecting others, to concentrate attention on one conspicuous case, let us state, at least partially, that of General Shefket Pacha.

As the praise of a certain early Christian was in all the churches, so the infamy of Shefket Pacha has sounded throughout Christendom.* It is enough to refer to the reports of Baring and Schuyler, and to my slight sketch from Vice-Consul Brophy (see *sup.*, p. 17). "The atrocity of his proceedings," as reported on June 14, says Sir H. Elliot, "has been fully confirmed by all subsequent inquiries" (I. 116). "At Boyadjik there was not a semblance of revolt, the inhabitants were perfectly peaceable" (I. 159). Every house was burned except 20 : 143 men and 6 women massacred (I. 158). For this service he received a

* Respecting Shefket Pacha, see I. 92, 116, 158-9, 257-8, 417, 729, 753; II. 131. Schuyler, Section on Sliven.

“high place in the Palace” (I. 159). Under pressure from without, he was dismissed on Sept. 2 (I. 92); but he was almost immediately (Sir H. Elliot, Sept. 26, I. 417) named a Member of the Military Council; and he is still retained upon it, although frequent representations have been made to the Porte that, in the face of the grave charges against him, his employment, till he had cleared himself, was “*almost* a defiance of public opinion.”

As if all this were not enough, recently it was stated by the ‘Times’ Correspondent that Shefket had been appointed to a command on the Danube. The statement was contradicted here, in answer to a question in Parliament. But, says the Correspondent (‘Times,’ March 1, 1877), it had been published in two Turkish Journals on Jan. 29 and 31, on Feb. 12 in the ‘*Courier d’Orient*’ and the ‘*Phare du Bosphore*,’ and on Feb. 13 in the semi-official ‘*Turquie*.’ And all without contradiction or notice on the spot from the Censors of the press. It is a fair inference, that this further appointment was intended; and that, had not public attention been drawn to the subject, it would have been made.

Meantime, the General is not without defenders; and the ‘Times’ (March 1, 1877) further quotes the following passage of supreme eulogy from the ‘*Vérité*’ of February 12, 1877, which is described as a Government organ. It refers to accusations of conspiracy made against this “important personage.”

“S. E. Shefket Pacha, entre autres, est un des meilleurs officiers de l’armée, dont le caractère, le mérite personnel, *et le passé*, sont les plus sûrs garants; son zèle, son patriotisme, et sa fidélité envers son pays militent trop en sa faveur pour qu’une enquête ait été jugée nécessaire.”

The fact that this paramount offender should have remained unpunished, rewarded, free, becomes yet more astonishing when we remember not only his place in the reports of Baring and Schuyler, but the efforts of Sir Henry Elliot, from the middle of June onwards, and at the very time when, according to Lord Beaconsfield, Turkey had no other wish than to take the advice of England, to obtain some measure of justice in this instance. The Porte did not attempt to show his innocence. She had in the Salonica case tried and retried, sentenced and resentenced, her own official servants under French and German pressure; and now we, the darling Power, could not obtain the smallest *modicum* of justice against Shefket. There is but one explanation. He was an agent; there was a principal behind. Who is that principal? Did Abdul Kerim, the General of the Army in Serbia, prevent his being sent to Philippopolis to be tried, and receive in consequence the thanks of his harem? (‘Times’ Corresp., March 1, 1877.) Does Shefket carry a telegraphic order of that same General to burn the village of Slivno, which Haidar spared, and was thereafter dismissed? Is he or is he

not a relative of Midhat? All this may be capable of disproof. Why was it not put to the test, by sending the sanguinary miscreant to Philippopolis for trial?

These ideas are not the mere offspring of carelessness or malignity. Sir Henry Elliot, incredulous to the last degree of any charge against a Turkish functionary, but ever honourable and plain-spoken when he sees the truth, returned on the 26th of November to the subject he had been so wearily and hopelessly treating for many months, and spoke to the Minister of War as follows (I. 729):

“I told him that, as the General professed to have in his pocket orders which would show that he had done no more than carry out his instructions, his continued impunity would lead to a belief in the truth of his assertion.”

From May to September, from September to November, from November to March, his impunity has continued. Could the wit of man have devised a more eloquent instruction to “do it again?” *

But though Shefket may be considered the Choregos of iniquity, some of those, who for like distinctions obtained other rewards, must not remain unnoticed.

Hakki Pacha, who, when acting as a judge, took

* He appears to have succeeded in diffusing round him a congenial tone; for Vice-Consul Brophy reports that he heard a Secretary of his “declare that the whole race of Bulgarians, innocent or guilty, ought to be exterminated.”—I. 10.

part against the Bulgarians whom he tried, was appointed in September to be Governor of Widdin (I. 296, 331). The Ambassador is desired to warn the Porte against the probable consequences of so unwise an appointment. The result, as usual, is *nil*.

Achmet Aga, in acknowledgment of his monstrous cruelty and iniquity at Batak, received the order of the Medjidje (I. 155). Presently a storm arose. He remained long at large; but it was at length found necessary to arrest him, Sept. 2 (I. 92), and to try him. After much shuffling, he was, on the 27th of December, condemned to death. Bulgarian Christians, when condemned, were executed forthwith. Achmet Aga still lived at the date of the latest news. For the pillage and burning of Yenikur, Nedjib Effendi was decorated (I. 161), so was Toussoun Bey, the hero of Dervent (or Klissoura) (I. 165, 522, and Schuyler). Hafiz Pacha (I. 165) received a command in Serbia (I. 165).

Many others are denounced by Mr. Baring (I. 156, 255), and Schuyler (*sub fin.*). Not one has been executed. The Vali of Adrianople has been dismissed, and there have been a few sentences to hard labour. We have not the smallest security that they will be carried into effect.

The statement of Sir H. Elliot, that Shefket Pacha alleged he carried with him justifying orders, is thus enlarged in the report of Schuyler.*

* Section on Sliven.

“Shefket Pacha quitted Boyardjik with the intention of subjecting the surrounding villages to a similar fate, and produced a telegram to that effect from the Serdar-ékrem Abdul Kerim Pacha, which ordered the destruction of those places.”

Here is a positive, public, and official statement; to which we hear of no contradiction.

VI. My sixth charge is that those Mahometans, who had hindered or slackened the work of blood, sometimes at great risk to themselves, were in every case either passed over or dismissed.

There is hardly a more touching chapter in the whole sad story, than the conduct of these good Mahometans. From the bottom of our hearts let us cry, “May God reward them!” Having the same temptations as others to indulge the spirit of revenge, yet, in the teeth of their co-religionists, and despite the well-understood sentiments of their Government, they did their duty in the day of need; and in the Day of Judgment, without doubt, their doing it will be remembered.

It is a pleasure, alas! a solitary pleasure, to record them.

Aziz Pacha, who was unfavourable to the arming of the Mussulman population, was recalled from Philippopolis (I. 146).

Hamid Pacha, who succeeded him, saved the city, says Mr. Baring (*ibid.*), by his firmness and impartiality.

Haydar Effendi, the Mutessarif of Slimnia (I. 383 ; I. 166, 247 ; II. 208, 210) was spoken of by the Christians "in terms of the highest praise," and delivered that Caza or district from devastation. He then frustrated the design of Shefket Pacha to burn the village of Slivno ; and he has been dismissed, according to the Correspondent of the 'Times' (March 1, 1877), from his place.

Yamboli was saved from the destruction intended by Shefket Pacha through the interference of "a Mussulman named Hafiz Effendi, a most noble and liberal-minded man. Braving the opinion of his co-religionists, he took as many Christian families as he could into his house, and, going to Shefket, insisted that the plundering should be stopped." (I. 158).

The case of Hadji Shaban requires a longer notice. He was Mudir of Kazan. Hearing that 300 Bashi Bazouks were marching upon the village of Virbitza, he started, alone, to overtake them. Two Christian peasants came into view. The ruffians began to observe one to another that it would be as well to kill them, for they might have money upon them. Hadji Shaban thereupon halted them, and went himself over to the two peasants. Hearing murmurs, he boldly pointed his gun at the 300, and ordered them to pass on. Abashed, as is constantly the case with the Turk, by manful conduct, the body marched forwards the fifty paces he had com-

manded, and Hadji Shaban took the rescued peasants home. Now mark the Vice-Consul's conclusion (I. 383). "Shortly afterwards, Hadji Shaban was dismissed from his post; I do not know for what reason."

In the district of Tournova (or Tirnovo?), after 600 Christians had been destroyed on the side of the people, and six Mussulmans on the side of the Government, *only* twenty-four Bulgarians were executed under judicial sentence. But this number "would have been at least tripled," says Mr. Baring, had it not been that Ali Shefik Bey, the President of the Commission, was "a just man," and did what he could on the side of mercy (I. 162).

Eshrif Pacha, Vali of Salonica, was indefatigable in his efforts to obtain the deliverance of the women and children kidnapped from Batak (II. 81).

Ismail Effendi, sent to Isladi to recover the stolen cattle, was met by a proclamation from the authorities of the place that any man who claimed cattle, and failed to establish his claim, would be punished. He left to report the facts, and was sent back. Here we lose sight of him (II. 278).

Others, named by Vice-Consul Brophy for good service, are Ahmet Effendi, at Slimnia; Ismail Bey, at Karnabad; Ibrahim Aga, at Aidos (I. 247).

I close this head with an extract from Mr. Baring's Report of September 1st. His list, framed at that date, is of course not exhaustive.

“Those, who have committed atrocities, have been rewarded; while those, who have endeavoured to protect the Christians from the fury of the Bashi Bazouks and others, have been passed over with contempt.

“For example :—

“Shefket Pacha holds high office in the Palace.

“Hafiz Pacha has a command in Serbia.”

“Achmet Agha has been decorated; so have Toussoun Bey, and Nedjib Effendi, Kaimakam of Plevna.

“On the other hand, has any reward been given to Hafiz Effendi, who saved Yamboli; to the Mutevelli of Karlovo; to Husni Effendi, commander of the troops at Yamboli, who saved those places; to Rustem Effendi, Yuzbachi at Tournova, who, having fought against insurgents really in arms, saved the prisoners from the fury of the mob; or to Haidar Effendi, Mutessarif of Slimnia?” (I. 165).

The answer is, No! and the reason is plain. The miscreants were rewarded, the humane and just were treated, in the words of Mr. Baring, “with contempt,” in perfect consistency with the whole method of the conduct of the Porte since the rising, and for the more emphatic inculcation of the lesson to *do it again*.

Many times (*e.g.* I. 28, 729, and 581) the Porte, with its usual and incomparable hardihood, has pleaded imperfect information as an excuse for the

honours and preferments bestowed on the miscreants. In what strangely crooked channels must this imperfect information have run, when it led the Government *both* to pass over or punish all the good men, and to reward all, so far as we know, who were conspicuously bad !

This imperfection, however, was removed on the 7th of October. On that day, not through his own exertions, but by information from the British Ambassador, Safvet Pacha was made aware (I. 488) who were the good Turks, that had nobly striven for humanity and justice. Five months have elapsed since the list was supplied ; and we do not find that, even for decency, or even to lull suspicion, so much as one among these good men has been re-appointed or rewarded. Is it possible that circumstantial proof can further go ?

VII. I have touched on the character of the Commission ; I now come to its conduct.

On the 21st of October Sir H. Elliot (I. 581) gives an account of an interview with the Grand Vizir.

“I said that Mr. Baring’s Reports showed that the Commission, in conducting this inquiry, were desirous of favouring the accused, rather than of eliciting the truth.”

The Grand Vizir’s language in reply was “not satisfactory.”

On the 5th of October (I. 521) Mr. Baring had conversed with the whole of the Commissioners. All

of them told him the relations of Mussulmans and Christians had become excellent; that Achmet Aga (since condemned to death) had by his promptitude averted a great public calamity: the fact, that the Bulgarians feared to move about, was admitted; but the reason was that, "knowing themselves to be guilty of all sorts of excesses, they shrank from meeting their Mahometan neighbours."

We have here a tolerably just measure of the character of these judicial functionaries: and it even seems to include the so-called good, as well as the bad.

With reference to the great case of Batak, Mr. Baring proceeds:—

"The Commission attaches great value to the evidence of some Turks, and of some Bulgarians of another village: but they appear to treat with contempt that which is offered by inhabitants of Batak itself" (I. 522).

Otlou-kevi, Avrat-Alan, and other villages had not yet been visited: Dervent (or Klissoura) had, but only one old woman's evidence was taken down. Other witnesses were to be summoned to Philipopolis (I. 522), where it was apparently a practice of the Commission to keep the impoverished people waiting for an indefinite time (I. 583). *Why* the evidence was not taken down at Dervent seems pretty plain.

"In this village the inhabitants certainly spoke out manfully, in spite of the presence of their authorities" (I. 522).

Now as to the capacity of the Commissioners. It appears (I. 582) that Ikiades Bey "was the only member of the Commission who really knew how to examine, the others being utterly inexperienced;" except Selim Effendi, of whom I shall have enough to say further on.

Ikiades Bey examined Achmet Aga, the hero of Batak, with great skill; but, says Mr. Baring (I. 582):—

"I regret to say he was frequently interrupted by the Mahometan members; to such an extent, that at one moment he refused to proceed."

The most atrocious charge, however, that has been raised in connection with the conduct of the Commission, was that of Mr. Schuyler, against Selim Effendi. I will shortly relate the circumstances, so far as I know them.

Mr. Schuyler and the Correspondent of the 'Daily News' ('Daily News,' Sept. 14, 1876) charged on Selim Effendi, a Commissioner, that before the trials he had visited the prisoners in their gaols and made use of torture to procure from them such evidence as he desired.

To this accusation I referred in a letter of Sept. 14th to the 'Daily News,' published on Sept. 16th.

At a later period, I received a letter from Selim Effendi, written in perfectly becoming terms, and complaining, as if innocent he might well do, of so grievous a charge. He entered into details,

the whole of which were connected with the forms in the Court, not to acts before the trials. He pointed to these forms, as clearly demonstrating that nothing of the kind could have taken place.

I lost no time in forwarding his letter to the 'Daily News,' that it might have the advantage of immediate publicity, and it was at once printed by the Editor (Dec. 19, 1876); but he very properly pointed out that the charge related to one thing, and the defence to another.

I pointed out this remarkable fact in a letter to Selim Effendi, dated Dec. 16, and published in an English version on that day by the same journal; I explained who were the real authors of the charge, and expressed my expectation that he would at once address himself to the consideration of it.

Since that time nearly three months have elapsed; but not another word has, to my knowledge, proceeded from Selim Effendi.

Consul Schuyler, however, informs me that he on his side intends to produce evidence in proof of his charge.

VIII. The failures, excesses, and crimes of the Porte are not commonly prompted from without; but the ideas of duty, justice, mercy, are purely exotic, and, as it were, mechanically, if at all, infused into the system. I have not found from the Papers that in May, or June, or July, or August, it had occurred to the Turkish Government that some assistance

ought to be afforded to its houseless, plundered, and be it remembered unaccused, subjects. First (I believe) on the 25th of September (I. 316), we learn, on Turkish authority, that a sum of money had been sent into Bulgaria. But this was four days after * the peremptory despatch of Lord Derby had been written, in which (I. 238) the restoration of buildings, and of industries, was demanded.†

IX. It is, then, four, nay, more nearly five, months after the Massacres, when we begin to hear of the restorations. To repair the devastations of every kind, apparently of a hundred times the amount, the Porte, under the extremest pressure, slowly supplied a sum of 18,000 Turkish pounds (I. 316) = about 16,000*l.*: and ordered the people to find and carry the wood of which the houses were to be built. Mussulmans and Christians were alike included in this command: the latter impoverished and plundered, the former (as a rule) untouched, or enriched by spoil. Mr. Baring says: "I fear it is not too much to say that the greater part of this forced labour will fall on Bulgarians, who can ill afford to give it" (I. 430, 431).

* I take it for granted that the substance of the important despatch of September 21 was made known in anticipation or through Musurus Pacha by telegraph.

† The Turks might certainly have retorted upon Lord Derby the strange plea he had used in May. When they had spent far less, he objected to a demand of this kind in the Berlin Memorandum, on the ground that Turkey had no money to meet it. See Papers of 1876.

To find materials, and bring them to the spot, was imposed upon the rayahs, who could not move out in safety to seek for them : and the cost of restoration was actually entered as a charge against those who were thought likely to have at a future day the means of paying for it (I. 525). From those who had means—means to pay a second time for their own houses—payment was exacted at once : and thus was the work of restoration performed by the Government !

The Christian inhabitants of Peshtera were ordered to provide at Begha 4800 beams of wood, or about eight beams for each able-bodied male (I. 525). A like requisition was made on the Mahometans, but they were rich with plunder, the Christians had only the roof over their heads.

And how was the work carried on ? Mr. Baring tells us on the 8th of October, that of forty-three Turkish houses in the place, no less than forty were then rebuilt or were in course of it, “not a single Christian house (out of sixty-one) had been touched” (I. 526).

All that was wanted to make the scheme of these restorations perfect, was supplied by placing over them Ali Bey, as a superintendent. Mr. Baring says :—

“ If the Commission wished to select a man, whose name would inspire terror in the hearts of the Bulgarians, a most admirable selection has been made ” (I. 670 ; compare 669).

Had there been a spark of human feeling in the breast of the Turkish Government, it would have endeavoured to make palpable to the people the sense of a desire to do justice, and a moral change. But, in point of wantonness, the deeds which followed the great Vengeance almost exceeded those which were included in it. Thus about the middle of July, before we had even learned officially any appreciable portion of the truth, irregulars forwarded by rail from Adrianople to the seat of war amused themselves "in many places" (I. 13) by firing from the train on such Bulgarians as dared to labour in the fields, and even women, as well as men, were wounded in this manner.

True, however, to the arts of falsehood, the Porte continued to send forth anodyne assurances; and, when Sir Henry Elliot had been fairly choked with them, assured the British Government through Musurus Pacha (Nov. 23, I. 716) that all that was needful had been done. Houses rebuilt; carpets, victuals, blankets distributed; peasants supplied with agricultural implements and advances in money. And all this out of a fund of 16,000*l*.

On the 21st of November (II. 265), according to Turkish account, only 1598 houses out of 5300 had been rebuilt. The sum of the matter, under this head, then, is that to the free action of the Porte there is due nothing whatever; that what has been done was extorted by Lord Derby; that it has been

small in amount, late in time, partial in distribution, and a new instrument of oppression to many who had already suffered much.

X. Although the idea of restoration or alleviation in any form does not seem to have occurred to the Turkish mind, one department of the State at least did not forget Bulgaria; that was the Taxing Department.

On September 20, Consul Reade at Rustchuk hears that "the war and other taxes are being peremptorily levied; and that many who have lost their all, and cannot of course pay, are treated with great severity" (I. 415).

He adds, at that date, he is convinced that a system prevails which, "if the insurrection should be renewed, will bring on a far worse state of things than hitherto."

By September 20, this demand had been "suspended" (I. 418) in that district. But at Panagou-richta, writes Consul Schuyler, where the local industry was entirely ruined, the people were forced to pay the usual taxes, and to make good the damage done by the Turkish troops. They had been so careless as to burn a granary belonging to a tax-gatherer, and the inhabitants were required to bear the loss. (§ Repression.)

XI. My eleventh head of charge is on the continuance of the outrages, through many weary months after the Massacres. And here the only

difficulty is how to escape from overwhelming the reader with the abundance of the evidence.

In July, writes Vice-Consul Dupuis on the 20th (I. 12), after all that had occurred, there was a fresh levy of Bashi Bazouks at Hasskevi.

“After committing excesses in that town, which ought to have been sufficient warning to the authorities, they were suffered to depart for Philippopolis. The Caza of Hasskevi, and the Makié of Kinoush, “which had escaped, comparatively speaking unhurt, the former razzia of the Bashi Bazouks,” “were destined this time to become the scene of new outrages, and fresh horrors.”

He then describes the careful organisation, under which these ruffians conducted the business of plunder.

Mr. Reade, who on Aug. 11 reported from Rustchuk the hangings of Bulgarians, on the 15th reports the gross maltreatment of a boy, including the “beating him unmercifully over the head,” by a “regular,” that is to say, a Turkish marine officer; which I name, because he happened himself to witness it. He reported it to the Pasha, who “did nothing whatever” (I. 66).

On the 19th, he mentions that he has “every now and then” reports of robbery, violence, and often murder by the Circassians; a few days before, of six Bulgarians murdered by them. No Bulgarian dare move about, unless with a Turkish guard, “whom he has to pay heavily.” “I have over and over

again spoken to the Pasha on the subject, but to no purpose" (I. 67).

Mr. Brophy, on Aug. 18, reports from Bourgas (I. 117) how on July 21 eight Circassians attacked a Bulgarian family at midnight. The father and son were pricked with daggers to obtain money; the daughter, of thirteen or fourteen, was twice violated, the second time "before her father's eyes." He has heard, but is not quite certain, that the girl was dead. Other outrages were committed on Aug. 3 or 4; and on the 12th, when four Circassians, on a sheep-stealing excursion, fired at the two shepherds. One was killed, the other not expected to live.

On Aug. 26 Mr. Brophy writes from Bourgas (I. 247): "On every side the Bulgarians are robbed, beaten, or killed, by their Circassian or Turkish neighbours. The rayahs are in many places afraid to go to their fields to plough, or to the mill to get their corn ground. The Mussulmans of all races seem to consider that it is lawful to despoil the 'infidel' in every way, and, if the 'infidel' dare to resist, to murder him."

With much more to a like effect; and with a notice of some honourable exceptions "among officials and private gentlemen."

Observe that these reports are from a portion of Bulgaria hardly implicated in the rising. Let us now pass to the south of the Balkans.

Mr. Baring reports on Sept. 26, four months after

the Massacres, "no visible improvement has taken place in the condition of the Bulgarian villagers." The people were taken from their own grounds, to execute forced labour for the Turks, in a case which he names, and he is assured the same goes on throughout the Province (I. 431). On the next day he writes thus from Tatar Bazardjik (I. 432): "Not a day passes without the rayahs being insulted, threatened, and made to feel their inferiority." On the same day, Acting V. C. Calvert reports (I. 430): "The inhabitants of the burnt villages stand so much in dread of the Pomaks,* that they dare not go to the forests to cut wood for new dwellings; whilst the Pomaks make continual raids on the shelterless people, and take what few things they possess."

Passing again to the North, we find that Consul Reade on the 5th of October reports thus (I. 519):—

"The open acts of tyranny and oppression of the chiefs of police, municipality, and such other authorities in power, that are also of daily occurrence, are alone sufficient to goad any people into revolt."

About the same time, October 6th, Consul Sanderson reports on the raids of the Circassians in the Dobrutscha. I will not dwell on the details of plunder and maltreatment: but it is well to notice that when these ruffians came up to serve as troops

* The local name for Mahometan Bulgarians.

to Toultscha, by the order of the Governor, "many of the inhabitants buried their goods." This is one of the minor facts, perhaps more instructive in respect to the daily and habitual life of the subject-races in Turkey, than any number of details concerning actual crime.

On the 5th of October, writing from Philippopolis, Mr. Baring repeats his statement "that no improvement had taken place in the condition of the Bulgarians" (I. 521), and supports it by some cases. The murder of a Christian at Strelidja by two fellow-villagers; the women there unable to repair to the field, as the Turks violate them; a man sent to the place to work at harvest, but the Turks attempt to violate *him as well as* his mother, and they fly. A theft happening at Bellova, two Bulgarians are seized; and then two more, who are beaten until they consent to give evidence against the first two. A Bulgarian girl is beaten by a Mussulman gipsy, for refusing to do forced labour for him. Christians demanding the restitution of stolen goods, are threatened for it by the depredators who hold them. Wounded Bulgarians are seen in three cases by Mr. Baring himself: but in the last of these, wonderful to say, and probably owing to his presence, the malefactors had been arrested. Such are a set of instances, wound up with a declaration that "nothing can possibly be worse than the condition of the Christians in this part of Turkey" on the 5th of

October; when the Porte had already had four months to repent of and redress the villainies, which, instead, it protected and rewarded.

One day later, Mr. Calvert writes from the same place (I. 525):—

“As regards the general condition of the Christian peasantry, I regret to say that it is as deplorable as ever. One well-authenticated incident will give an idea of the universal manner in which the Mussulmans are armed. A Pomak child, receiving the other day some real or imaginary offence from a Christian woman in a village near Peshtera, drew a pistol, and fired point blank at the woman, wounding her severely in the belly.”

She lay at Philippopolis “in a precarious state.” For the boy (of 8 or 10 years) the law provided no punishment. For the last four months, at Hasskevi, the Christian inhabitants had been forced to work without pay for the Turks.

In the Kalofer case, the ‘*Courier d’Orient*’ was suppressed for criticising the declaration by Lord Beaconsfield of the falsity of the story that forty girls had been burned there. It was false. In every case of terror such as this, however large the truth may be, it is sure to be exaggerated here and there by fable. But in that very place the villagers who contradicted the story, said “that many women had been ravished, often in the presence of their relations” (I. 161): a favourite practice, as the

Papers prove, with the Turks. Many women were also killed (I. 14).

At length, on the 12th of November, Mr. Baring reports "a change for the better in the state of public security." But again on the 4th of December, he regrets to have learned "several cases of robbery and violence," and a regular raid, made upon Avrat-Alan by a number of Turks. There were troops in the place, and the robbers fled: but "no arrests were made" (II. 60, 61).

On the 11th of December (II. 78) he reports two deaths "under suspicious circumstances," at Peroustitza, which he fears will make it more than ever difficult to obtain evidence against any Turk. A Bulgarian peasant has been found murdered on the road to Bazardjik. A policeman (zaptieh) steals the cat of an old man; perhaps the only living thing, which was now left him in the world to love. When the old man came to reclaim it, the zaptieh cut him down, and gave him a severe wound in the wrist. He went to Bazardjik to complain; but the brother policemen, with a fine feeling of loyalty to their comrade, drove him off. The zaptieh, thus under Mr. Baring's eyes, was captured; but (p. 79) he escaped. News came, Dec. 15, that he was recaptured. And we hear no more. It is the old story. Everywhere the insolence of old domination breaks out in crime; committed, in a large share of instances, by the professed ministers of the law. If the agent of

a foreign Government be near, if he chance to hear of it, if he be humane, intelligent, active, bold, and persevering, then the Porte is compelled for the moment to mask its habitual purpose of shielding and rewarding outrage in a case like this, and to take some lazy measure towards a trial, in the nature of a first step which need not be followed up. So it is under the happy combination of all these *ifs*, which does not always happen. It did happen in the case of Mr. Baring. But how was it possible, even for him—and I think that the Queen has never had a braver or a better servant—to follow up continuously every case, to track the Porte and its agents through all its shiftings and escapes, to inspire, into what was for every purpose of good no better than a corpse, the hearty pulse of justice?

On the 30th of November (II. 33) Mr. Calvert reported that owing to the presence of soldiers, at last obtained, and to the punishment of some *recent* outrages, a gradual yet continuous improvement was observable. The country was now full of relief-agents, every one of whom would be a centre of protective influence; and it would have been somewhat difficult to keep the troops out of Philippopolis at a time when it had become necessary to mass them in the Peninsula of the Balkans on account of the threatening attitude of the Russian forces.

But on the 19th of December, Mr. Baring is again found entreating protection for the village of Petruch

from those who were its legal, and should have been its zealous protectors. Here, he says, near the Vilayet of Sofia, the Turks show a most lawless spirit, and commit continual robberies (II. 178).

Again going northwards, we find from Mr. Reade on the 30th of December, that through the Vilayet of the Danube the Christians are in great and general alarm; that, while he was there, robberies and violences were committed by other Mussulmans, as well as by Circassians; that Fandoukly Sultan, a notorious and wholesale offender during the massacres, had been all this time at large, until, under pressure from him, bail was exacted; that the villages enjoying security only obtained it by paying Circassians for immunity, at the rate of 3000 to 4000 piastres a year (II. 208).

Here closes the sickening series of official reports. These outrages were thus constantly committed, with abundant shelter from a Government which towards outrage at least was truly paternal, upon a people most of whom had no concern whatever in the rising; and at a time, when the rest were subdued, and even grovelling, under abject terror, and under the memory, mingled with the anticipation, of abominations hard to believe, and in some cases far too foul to name.

Happily we have the promise of a further report from Consul Schuyler upon this subject. In the meantime, for the months of January and February,

I refer to the petition of Bulgarian Notables, dated Feb. 3, in the 'Daily News' of March 3; to a petition, which has been presented from the villages in the district of Tatar Bazardjik to the Representatives of the Six Powers, and of which I possess a copy; finally to the declaration of a Bulgarian, whom Mr. Jasper Moore, an English gentleman well known in political life, attests to me as among the very best authorities in the country. I subjoin his description, dated Feb. 26, 1877, from Philippopolis.

“The Juggernaut of Turkish extortion is abroad; a debased paper currency, forced labour for transporting military stores, or for working at military works, a second compulsory war contribution, squeeze the very life-blood out of our people. . . . Murders, outrages, and robberies by Mussulmans on Christians are occurring almost daily. Why should they not? Midhat's Constitution was made for the Europeans, and not for the people of this country?”

Such is the continuing condition of Bulgaria. One outrage perhaps in a hundred repressed or noticed, and that always under representation or influence from the agents of foreign Powers; who do not perceive or appreciate the normal utility of these outrages in producing the submissiveness, which is regarded as the only secure basis for the Turkish domination.

XII. The presence of a military force in Bulgaria has been but a bad security against outrage. But it was the only one; since the presence of Bashi Bazarbas, or the free action of the Mussulman Pomaks.

was invariably a security not against outrage, but for it. The regulars were heavily implicated, on various occasions, in the crimes of the suppression.* Something of even their character may be inferred from the Blue Books of last year. I quote the case, because I stated it with full detail in Parliament on July 31, 1876, and no contradiction has been or could be given. A party of twelve refugees came back from Dalmatia to Herzegovina, on the invitation of the Porte, under the escort of a party of regulars. The refugees were attacked, and massacred to a man, by some local Mahometans: the appointed guardians stood by and looked on (Papers of 1876, I. 49). However, there was a chance that they might do their duty in Bulgaria, on which the eyes of all Europe were now set. Without them, the ordinary routine of plunder, murder, rape, and bestiality, was certain. Without them, also, says Mr. Sandison, it was not easy to say (I. 372) how far the Commission would or even could do its duty.

* See, for example, Mr. Baring's Report, I. 157. After a recital of horrors (such as the *violation, followed by the murder, of a girl of fourteen, in the presence of her mother*), he says, "The case is not improved by the fact that these deeds were committed not only by Bashi Bazouks, but also by regulars; the Arab soldiers in particular, distinguishing themselves by their licentiousness and ferocity." Again. "I am told," says Mr. Marsh (I. 986), "that the soldiers in Sliven number 600. . . But I myself have seen and experienced their lawlessness. The city would be safer without them!" Also see Mr. Schuyler on Novo Mahalleh and Peroustitza.

On the 26th of September, nearly five months after the Massacres began, Mr. Baring reports, from the central point of Philippopolis, as follows (I. 431):—

“No troops have been sent here from Constantinople; the 3000 men who left last week, and some of whom were said to be destined to garrison this town, went on to the seat of war.”

This passage opens up another of the dark labyrinths of iniquity and falsehood, into which we must now descend.

The practice of the Turks and their devotees, since the Massacres, has been persistently to ascribe “what occurred” to the want of regulars. On their own showing, then, it was the first duty of the Porte to supply this want. It would be ridiculous to contend that this Empire of forty millions, ready as it is stated to face the eighty millions of the Czar, or even all Europe, in arms, could not supply 3000 or 4000 men for Bulgaria, because it had to conduct military operations against populations numbering say two millions, who were aided in Serbia by three or four thousand Russian volunteers. From May to July 1, however, even such a war did not exist.

We find, notwithstanding, that Bulgaria remains denuded of military, to such an extent that Acting Vice-Consul Calvert has to move the Porte through Sir H. Elliot, by telegraph from Philippopolis, on two successive days, to provide for the peace of one of its

own provinces lying next its capital. On the 16th of September he announces that threats are freely used by the Mussulmans, that isolated outrages are frequent, and "can only be stopped by considerable reinforcements of troops and police to disarm Turks." On the 17th, we are told the local Governor had already applied to Constantinople, but without result. "Bloodshed on a small scale possible, unless more troops sent at once" (I. 373). The Governor had made a second application. All in vain!

On the 19th, Sir H. Elliot sent his Dragoman to represent the case. With the two applications of his own Governor in his pocket, the Grand Vizir impudently replied, "that the news received by the Sublime Porte were satisfactory, and that nothing necessitated the Government sending troops in the direction of Philippopolis."

This, it may be said, was the Grand Vizir, not the impeccable Midhat. But unfortunately the next words of the Dragoman are, "Midhat Pacha has confirmed the words of the Grand Vizir" (I. 374).

It seems, however, to have been felt that this portion of the miserable farce had been rather over-acted; and Sir H. Elliot writes on the 20th (I. 373), "I have since been told that a considerable number of troops have been sent to the district in question." Join on to this Mr. Baring's report of the 26th; and the picture is complete, as to the particular transaction.

But the particular transaction must also be joined on to the original proceedings of the Turk. At the outset of the rising "the provincial authorities sent urgent appeals to Constantinople for troops;" but the Grand Vizir did not send them (I. 164).

Mr. Baring insinuates that he listened to the evil counsels of Russia. But where, in this great emergency, were the good counsels, and the boasted influence, of England? If it be true that Russian agents recommended that the Massacre should be allowed, it is all the more expedient that we should keep out Russian ascendancy by now at length showing the Slavs that they have something else to lean on; but no counsel of Russian agents can in the least degree diminish, though it might cumulate, the abominable guilt.

Why were not the Bashi Bazouks recalled when their horrible proceedings had become known? Sir H. Elliot incessantly pressed it. (Papers, I. 9.)

On May 23, 1876, Mr. Sandison, by the order of the Ambassador, strongly remonstrated against the employment of the Bashi Bazouks in Bulgaria, peace still prevailing; but the Grand Vizir replied that he had referred the matter to Abdul Kerim, the Commander-in-Chief; to that Abdul Kerim, whose written order to kill, burn, and destroy, we are told that Shefket Pacha carries, as the amulet of his safety. (Papers of 1876, III. 214.)

On the 8th of June (Papers of 1876, III. 267),

the Ambassador was assured that the irregulars had been recalled. But on a later day of the same month, the Porte expressly refused to withdraw them; and we now further know that at a later date a fresh levy of them, and also of Circassians, was made. (Papers of 1877, I. 12.)

On the 5th of October Mr. Reade reports, that for want of police and military, "the public security is very unsatisfactory," both in the Dobrutcha, and almost throughout the Vilayet of the Danube (I. 518).

This relates to Bulgaria north of the Balkans: we have already accounted for the country to the south.

XIII. Among the many recitals of the defensive or apologetic language, by which the Porte was obliged to conceal its real sentiments respecting the Massacres, there is not to be found one single expression of condemnation, nay, not even of regret, for the utter ruin, and ineffable sufferings, of so many Bulgarians. It appears that no pressure of words from England, no dread of acts from Russia, has been able to draw from the Porte one syllable against the Massacres. From a certain point of view, this is even creditable.

The favourite method is to describe the Bulgarian outrages as "recent events" (II. 50), "occurrences" (I. 316), "what has occurred" (I. 750). But sometimes there seems to arise a vision of diminished

receipt from Bulgaria ; and we hear of the “troubles” (II. 319), “losses” (II. 225), “grievous sacrifices” (II. 24). The nearest approach to decency that is found practicable is in the phrase “unhappy business” (I. 61), used by Safvet Pacha on the 10th of August, and “sad episode” on December 23rd, (II. 225). Turkey sought too, “to heal the wounds of the civil war,” by the means faintly imaged in these pages. The true spirit comes out in the speech of Ali Effendi, delivered for the Government in the trial of Alish Pehlivan, on the 20th of December, as it is reported by Mr. Baring. “Had it not been for the gallant efforts of those public benefactors, the Bashi Bazouks, the Empire would have been placed in great jeopardy” (II. 179). And this is borne out by the judgment of Mr. Baring in another dispatch (I. 432).

“The vast majority of the Mussulman population look upon the perpetrators of the horrors not as criminals, but as heroes, who, for their praiseworthy efforts to extirpate a noxious race, have deserved well of their country.

XIV. I have not discovered in a single document proceeding from the Porte an admission that any excesses had been committed by the Mahometans in Bulgaria. When Sir Henry Elliot says he had received promises (*e.g.* I. 419), that the “guilty” should be punished, he does not profess to be quoting official language. In the view of the Porte,

and in the declarations of the Porte, there are nowhere any guilty, except Bulgarian Christians.

Two methods of proceeding, however, seem to have been pursued. In communicating with the British Ambassador, it would have been perilous to say outright there was no outrage, no atrocity, in the execution of the Vengeance. The indirect method is therefore adopted. On June 19, 1876, the Grand Vizir (Papers of 1876, III. 344) dwelt upon the exaggerations, which were but here and there; on the atrocities of the Christians, which cannot be said to have existed in the sense in which the Turks flooded Bulgaria with atrocities; of the foreign agents, respecting whom Mr. Baring spoke in his first Report, but explained in a later Paper that they were not foreign at all, but were expatriated natives of Bulgaria. Again, Safvet Pacha complained bitterly that the deeds of the Turks were exaggerated by the newspapers: and this at a time when British official agents had hazarded the astounding statement that it was uncertain on which side the greatest amount of crime had been committed!

But for the outer world, a different and bolder course was adopted. I refer again to the Order of Blacque Bey, in which he speaks, on the 8th of August, of the pretended excesses committed in Bulgaria, and recites as part of the ground for suppressing a newspaper, that it had ascribed to

itself a sort of merit in having been the first to expose those imaginary crimes (*supposés*).

So on the 5th of October (I. 524) Toussoun Bey stoutly maintained “that there had been no massacre at Dervent.” This worthy’s performances at the place are thus recorded by Mr. Baring (I. 523) :—

Men slain at Dervent ...	...	...	58.
Women and children ...	...	...	192
Infants ...	...	...	30

And surely, in addition to his other decorations, still enjoyed, he deserves the title of “the Infant-Slaughterer.”

But it is not necessary to multiply the denials of inferior authorities in detail; for we proceed next to the highest of all authorities. It is however well to mention that, in close parallelism with the denials and evasions, ran the careful suppression of intelligence.

On one occasion the Porte had put into action a perilous machinery. After the scandalous affair of Edib Effendi, it sent two Christian Commissioners of its own to Philippopolis; and moreover it instructed them to tell the truth. It appears that they tried to do so. With regard to “the principal scenes of slaughter” their report did not “differ materially from that of Mr. Baring,” except as to numbers slain; and they denounced the conduct of those who executed the Vengeance in the severest terms. At

Batak they set forth that the villagers had given up their arms before they were assailed ; and that “ men, women, and children were ruthlessly slaughtered by the Bashi Bazouks, led by Achmet Agha, his son, and his son-in-law ” (I. 418, 419).

But this report has been kept back by the Turkish Government ; and it was not from them, but by some other means, that Sir H. Elliot obtained an acquaintance with its contents (*ibid.*).

XV. On the 11th of January, 1877 (II. 190), Lord Salisbury sends home a list of proposals to which as an irreducible minimum the Russian representative, and to which also the other representatives, had agreed. Among these is named—

“ General amnesty to Christians condemned for political reasons.”

In II. p. 274, Midhat is represented by Sir H. Elliot as having declined the proposal.

In p. 302, Lord Salisbury mentions on the 12th of January, a concession proposed by Midhat. He offered “ to grant an amnesty to Mussulmans and Christians.” This amnesty would, as Lord Salisbury proceeds to observe, have included Shefket Pacha and Achmet Aga.

XVI. We may now proceed to consider the authentic Ottoman account of the Bulgarian Massacres. It was delivered by Safvet Pacha, in the assembled Conference, on the 23rd of December. We shall find that it did not stop short of eulogy. Assuredly of blame

it does not contain a word, except for the "revolutionary party," and the Bulgarian people.

The revolt broke out, said Safvet Pacha, "in a country as quiet as it was prosperous:" of which the moral wants had been the object of a special solicitude, so that the Porte was even accused of an undue partiality for the Bulgarians (II. 225).

No attempt is made to sustain by evidence this string of gross untruths. It was perhaps hoped that we should have mistaken the schools, which the energy of the people had built for themselves at their own cost, or which in some cases missionary activity had supplied, for a sign of the moral solicitude of the Turk.

These ungrateful Bulgarians, he continues, deluded by the strangers, rose against their benefactor, and massacred, pillaged, and burnt out the Mussulmans. But the movement was repressed, "without that effusion of blood which was pretended." Quite on the contrary "one would be astonished that an insurrection, which had for its object the conversion of all the Peninsula of the Balkans into a vast field of slaughter, could have been suppressed and completely annihilated, in so short a time, and without having had more losses to complain of."

Such is the estimate formed by the official Turk of orgies, which hell itself might have envied. But he is not yet content. In the face of Europe, he pronounces a deliberate eulogy upon his crimes (II. 227).

“ Turkey can say that it is her firmness and moderation which have overpowered that great revolutionary conspiracy, which openly aimed at the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire, and at profoundly disturbing the peace of Europe.”

And for this, and the whole of its services (*ibid.*), “ The Ottoman Government believes it has acquired new claims to the sympathetic interest of the Great Powers.”

These declarations entirely support my view. From first to last the Porte has been consistent. Compelled at times for a moment to dissemble, it has returned, upon the earliest opportunity, to its point of view. The bloodshed in Bulgaria was small not great, the whole proceedings good not bad. How, if this fails, is it possible for us to be undeceived as to the character, in its internal government, of an ally with whom the British Ambassador hopes to see us drawn into yet closer ties of sympathy and friendship (I. 425) ?

XVII. The inquiry, originally wrung from the Porte, has been proved, by its history and upshot, to be a fictitious and pretended inquiry, a mockery and a prostitution of justice.

I might lengthen this pamphlet by setting out in detail the series of complaints by the Ambassador, the Consuls, the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Baring, respecting the delays, the evasions, the partiality, of the Commission, its evident determination to do as

little as possible, and to do nothing that was effective, or (which is the same thing) that could bring it into collision with the inflamed and savage temper of the Mahometan population of Bulgaria.

As respects Lord Derby, it may be enough to say that on the 24th of November (II. 14) he addressed to the Porte through Lord Salisbury a most severe condemnation of the Commission; and that this condemnation was cited by the Government on the 12th of February, 1877, in the House of Commons, a fact showing that we must consider it as still in full force.

Lord Derby contrasts the laxity shown in bringing the Mussulmans to justice with "the activity displayed by the Porte in punishing the Christians;" and says of the Commission, the amended and final Commission (*ibid.*):

"The conduct of the Commission has also been in many other respects most unsatisfactory: the few members of it, who have shown any capacity for judicial investigation, have been checked and hindered by the interruptions of their colleagues; and, months after the massacre of hundreds of women and children, and of unarmed men, the Commissioners are still considering whether such murders are crimes."

Down to this date the Turkish Government had only supplied a sum of 7000*l.* for the restoration of the village. Nothing done to restore the industries. It was doubtful how many of the kidnapped women

had been brought back. No examples on the spot. The trials far from the scene of the outrages. "The proceedings have thus been delayed, the effect of example lost, and the ends of justice to a great extent frustrated" (*ibid.*).

While Lord Derby described as above the conduct of the Commission, the Porte, at very nearly the same date, on the 22nd of November, assured the world (I. 751) that its progress was "most satisfactory;" that the character of its members "offered every guarantee" for justice; that "it was doing its work so speedily, that nothing further could be desired."

Until after the severe despatch of Lord Derby, dated September 21, we now hear from Mr. Baring (September 27, I. 432) that "not one of those who committed the atrocities had been put into confinement."

What, then, is the upshot, as far as at this date we know it?

It is important to bear in mind that after the murder of the Consuls at Salonica by a fanatical populace, not acting under the orders or according to the mind of the Government, the Porte made no difficulty about hanging at once six, and condemning to death six more, of the offenders. The extraordinary contrast between this proceeding and the course followed in the Bulgarian case, cannot possibly have been without a cause. The Porte does not desire the murder of Consuls. The Salonica mob

had not understood the Government; the offenders in Bulgaria had understood it, and fulfilled its will.

On the 12th of February, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs gave the following account of the sentences pronounced in Bulgaria for excesses in the execution of the Vengeance.

Two condemned to death: Achmet Aga, and an insignificant person, Melto Behtash.

One to hard labour for life.

Three to hard labour for terms.

Two to short imprisonments.

Two functionaries recalled.

Of the execution of these sentences, Mr. Bourke had nothing to say. They were sentences only. They were ten in number. In the case of the two Consuls at Salonica, where the Turkish mob really had some sort of excuse, they were *twenty-seven*. (Papers of 1876, IV. 56.)

I am not sure that this answer did full justice to the Turk. We hear from Mr. Brophy on July 22 (I. 13), that a Bashi Bazouk was stated to have been hung, it did not appear for what crime. Somewhere else the death of another obscure malefactor is reported. If we add these two to the list it stands, as follows:—

	For the murder of two Consuls.		For the murder of 15,000 Bulgarians, and very much besides.	
Hung	6	...	...	2
Sentenced, not hung	6	...	...	2
Other sentences ...	15	...	...	8

III.

CONCLUSION.

Our results on the whole may be summed up as follows :—

The Porte at first intended no inquiry at all into the repression, but energetically followed up the Massacres with further and rather sweeping vengeance.

It did not trust to avowed vengeance only; but prolonged the reign of terror and suffering in Bulgaria by advisedly withholding military guardianship.

To make its teaching yet more intelligible, it rewarded the most prominent cases of cruelty, and other yet worse outrage, by decorations, commands, and offices, as exhibitions of virtuous and patriotic energy; and it excluded from reward, or even visited with the punishment of dismissal, the cases, not a few, of courageous humanity among the Mussulmans, as exhibitions of a spirit unfaithful to the domination of Islam.

So far its action was perfectly spontaneous, as well as consistent; and it was singularly favoured by the extraordinary reticence, which kept back from the people of England the officially-attested knowledge of the Massacres, until in the month of August,

three months after they had occurred, it began to ooze out.

Then arose the indignation of this country; it resounded in every other; and in a sudden manner, and probably with surprise, the Porte, which had been exulting in the success of its great achievement, found itself charged, in the hearing of all Europe, with having committed through its agents a portentous mass of crimes.

When the first mutterings had previously reached it, Commissioners were sent out, and official papers contrived, and circulated in Europe, which by omission, and by positive falsehood, wholly put aside the charges. This measure was carefully backed by the suppression of a newspaper for daring to support them; and false confessions were extorted from the terrified population, to assure the world that they were unfounded.

After other shifts, as the Indignation "did not pass but grew," a Commission was appointed to proceed judicially. Men known to be bad were placed upon it to mar the action of their more honourable colleagues. The support of adequate force, which it required in order to withstand the exasperated pride of the Mahometan population, was withheld. Evasions and delays of every kind were practised; the Christians charged, and sometimes the Christian counsel who defended them, exhibited the most abject terror. The bad men of the Commission bullied and domineered from the bench. The sen-

tences have been few, slowly extorted under incessant diplomatic pressure, with the threat of Russian arms, and with the presence and incessant vigilance of foreign agents, especially of Mr. Baring. They have also been illusory, for as to those of confinement with or without hard labour, we have no means of knowing whether it has ever been inflicted, or whether if begun it will be continued. The only real, that is the only irrevocable sentence has been that of death, pronounced after some months of delay on one or two persons; in December, on a Pomak who had previously been rewarded for his crimes: and this sentence has not yet, in March, been executed. Even were the Turks to alter now the character of their proceedings, it is far too late. We have before us, “with ample verge and room enough,” the true character, first of their spontaneous view and action on the Massacres; secondly, of the niggardly amount of make-believe inquiry and retribution, which gratitude for favours too many and too recent, which the fear of estranging friendly sympathy too long maintained, which humanity, which reason, which policy, which anything short of coercion could wring out of a State, of which the heart is on this subject harder than the nether millstone.

“Duris genuit te cautibus horrens
Caucasus, Hyrcanæque admôrunt ubera tigres.”*

* Virgil. *Æn.* IV. 366.

It had become too late, for a long time too late, by any spasmodic change of proceedings to abate the force of the evidence here inadequately sketched, when on Friday, the 1st of March, the Under-Secretary of State was asked whether it was true that Toussoun Bey, the Infant-slaughterer, an offender second only to Shefket Pacha, with his batch of coadjutors, had been acquitted, and whether Mr. Baring had taken away the sanction of his presence from the Court which had performed this shameless mockery of justice? The answer was, that Toussoun and his accomplices had been absolved; that Mr. Baring had departed; and that no more trials would take place.

This is not a treatise on the subject of the East at large. But the Bulgarian outrages, though they are not the Eastern Question, are a key to the Eastern Question. They exhibit the true genius of the Turkish Government. Externally an isolated though portentous fact, they unlock to us an entire mystery of iniquity. Vast as is their intrinsic importance, they are yet more important for what they indicate, than for what they are. The heaviest question of all is not what was suffered in a given district at a given date, but what is the normal and habitual condition of eight or ten millions of the subject races, who for fifteen generations of men have been in servitude to the Turk. This is, I may say, the question of questions. And of this we can best judge by observing what is the conduct of the Government and its

agents upon a great and palmary occasion, when, for once, it is brought fully into view. Let us see, then, what light has just been cast upon it. With the outrages the Porte now stands unalterably identified; and a Government so identified is not merely weak, or impotent, or passionate, or cruel in this or that particular: it is a Government which reverses the great canon of right and wrong; and which, in the holding down of the subject races, adopts the motto given by Milton * to his Satan

“Evil, be thou my good.”

Not, indeed, that this inverted law is for the Porte an unvarying rule of action. There is no such thing in the world. Man is never consistent, in evil or in good. Hope, fear, interest, shame, a better nature breaking into light upon occasion, may produce, in its commonplace and secondary action, much that is less evil, and even some very few things that are good. But as in individual life, so in the life of Governments, it is the great crisis that searches nature to its depths, and brings out the true spirit of the man. The Bulgarian rising was a great crisis. A people of five millions, the most docile, patient, and submissive in all Europe, had dared to commence a revolt. It was as if the sheep were to attack the butcher, and fill him for a moment with alarm. Much violence, some cruelty,

* ‘Paradise Lost,’ iv. 110.

might in those circumstances well be understood. Habitual brutality, exasperated by fear, so far from remembering in the hour of wrath the long endurance of a suffering race, determined that in proportion to their effeminacy in bearing should be their deep descent into the pit of suffering. Bulgaria had on the whole theretofore exhibited the most splendid example of successful Turkism, in its perfect submission to terror; in the seeming extinction even of the wish to murmur; lastly, in the copious revenues yielded by its dogged industry. Alfieri boasted of the Italians, long years before their resurrection to a nation's life—

“Siam servi sì ; ma servi ognor frementi.”

In Bulgaria generally, even the last sigh had been stifled; it seemed not even to fret for freedom. And it is no wonder if to those who had spoiled this magnificent success, this great work of art, there was due, on the principles of Turkism, under the impulses of the wild beast that dwells in human nature, an exemplary vengeance. This is not new. The wars of the Serbian and of the Greek Revolutions* supplied apparent parallels to the great Bulgarian Vengeance. But Christendom had not then the open channels, which happily it now possesses, for tolerably full communication of the facts;

* See *e.g.* the admirable paper of Mr. Godkin on the Eastern Question in the ‘North American Review’ for January, 1877.

and though we may believe, we are not judicially entitled to assert, that the Turkish Government had at those junctures, as it has had now, the wretched perpetrators of the acts for the mere tools of its master-spirit, working from the centre at Constantinople for the misery of man.

This, I say again, is upon the whole the great anti-human specimen of humanity. To exorcise it will be easy, when the exorcisers are agreed; difficult only as long as some remain wrapped in contented ignorance, others case-hardened in political selfishness, and some even possessed, as the British Ambassador has been possessed, with the belief that the condition of the subject races of Turkey ought to be supremely determined by whatever our estimate of British interests may require.* A little faith in the ineradicable difference between right and wrong is worth a great deal of European diplomacy, bewildered by views it dare neither dismiss nor avow. In this state of things, and even with the great example of Mr. Canning in the case of Greece before us, it was natural to hope, as long as hope was not irrational, that the disease of Turkey was curable; that

* "We may and must feel indignant at the needless and monstrous severity with which the Bulgarian insurrection was put down; but the necessity which exists for England to prevent changes from occurring here, which would be most detrimental to ourselves, is not affected by the question whether it was 10,000 or 20,000 persons who perished in the suppression."—*Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby*, Sept. 4, 1876. Papers I. 197.

the mild and gentle tone, which the spirit of our Century has infused into so many Governments, might find access even to the hard heart of the Porte. But this hope only could be rational, only could be even excusable, so long as it remained ready to own the truth, to conform itself to the teaching of experience. This teaching we have now, to our sorrow, perhaps even to our shame, obtained. Neither weakness, nor accident, nor ignorance, nor an occasional fit of fury, nor the unfaithfulness of agents to their principal, lies at the root of the Bulgarian Massacres. They are the true expression of the spirit and policy of the Turkish Government in seasons of emergency; when, passing from the indifference and contempt with which it commonly regards every function of civil government, except the receipt of money, it dispels the precarious ease for which at times that indifference and contempt leave room, and in the words of Bluntschli, "does not shrink from sanguinary horrors" in support of its "barbarous domination."*

Again, then, I repeat the accusation. The Turkish Government, which debases its subjects when they submit, and by its agents plunders, violates, and murders them "at its own sweet will" from time to time, has a more developed and consistent method for seasons of crisis. On the occasions when they rise, as in Bulgaria, it exhausts upon them, it must be

* "Das Recht der Europäischen Intervention in der Türkei."
— In 'Die Gegenwart,' Berlin, December 9, 1876.

deliberately said, all the resources of a wickedness more fiendish than human, either by instigation beforehand, which is not yet proved, or by reward, protection, sanction afterwards, which is proved. After the most solemn and reiterated pledges to endow them with equality of rights, after incessant boastings of its own beneficent and paternal spirit, after trampling in the dust all these promises, and confuting all these boasts by its acts a hundred times repeated, it is inexhaustible like Proteus in ever new forms of evasion and escape, available to cozen none except those who are, lazily or perversely, willing to be deceived. Thus it is now going to be regenerated, for the hundredth time ; it has launched, at length, its written Constitution. On this I do not waste a word ; but I simply refer to the straightforward declaration of Sir Stafford Northcote,* and to the masterly and lacerating exposure of Lord Salisbury.† If ever, in the whole history of human action, a negative was demonstrated by experience, it is the moral impossibility that the Porte either will or can efficaciously transmute by self-reform the relation between itself and its subject races. And are we thus to go on from day to day, and from year to year ?

“The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months,
The months will add themselves and make the years.”

We palter, we excuse, we set up false lights to draw

* ‘Times’ of Feb. 9, 1877.

† Papers, II. p. 302.

us off the path ; at last with huge effort we appoint a man, yes, a real man, to speak ; but he is well warned that his big brave words at Constantinople shall be well understood to be words only. What in the meantime is the state of these subject races ? It is this ; that their Government is the incarnate curse of their existence. If the child can laugh, if the maiden can breathe freely, if the mother can tend the house and the father till the field in peace, it is when, and so long as, the agents of this Government are not in view ; and it only proves that tyrannous Power has not yet found the alchymy, by which it can convert human life into one huge mass of misery, uniform and unredeemed. What civilisation longs for, what policy no less than humanity requires, is that united Europe, scouted, as we have seen, in its highest, its united diplomacy, shall pass sentence in its might, upon a Government which unites the vices of the conqueror and the slave, and which is lost alike to truth, to mercy, and to shame. It is not a harsh sentence, but a mild one, that, at least where its guilt is thus fully proved, where the restoration of respect and confidence is hopeless, it shall submit, if not as I should desire to confine its claims to acknowledged dignity and liberal tributes,* yet at the very least to such restraints on

* I must, once for all, beg leave to assert my strong conviction that the method of a real autonomy, superintended from abroad in the transition-stage, is the method by far the most favourable, among all that have been proposed, to the Porte itself, as well as to its subjects, and to the peace of Europe.

the exercise of administrative power, as all Europe has declared to be indispensable. But above all, let us not cover with the name of compromises the new shifts we may devise to hide the nakedness of our minds, and the feebleness of our wills. A "respite" for Turkey is simply a respite to the criminal, not from punishment, but from prevention; a solemn licence to continue his misdeeds. "A year of grace" to Turkey is to Turkey's victims only another year of debasement; of want; of misery and shame, felt more or less keenly by them just in proportion as they may less or more retain the higher senses and capabilities of humanity. In this free country, every man has his word, and every man his responsibility: the action of every man contributes to make up that tide of opinion, which moves the moral world. I ask of England, that we redeem the pledges which we gave to the subject races by the Crimean War, and by the Peace which followed it. Let others if they choose invite the spreading of new snares, and walk into them in open day. With a share of the responsibility of the Crimean War upon me, I respectfully decline to join them: and I have a firm conviction that, when the people of England tell their mind to the world and to the Porte in the choice of their representatives from time to time, the lesson conveyed by their acts, so far as it goes, will be, "You shall *not* do it again."

March 10, 1877.

